Save Foggy Bottom...It's Where We Live!

Published by the Foggy Bottom Association

FOGGY BOTTOM NEWS

Vol. 47, No. 17 www.savefoggybottom.com April 5, 2006

Council Chair Candidate Gray Addresses FBA

City Councilmember Vincent Gray (D-Ward 7) gave an outline on education, health care and other key issues facing the city in a crucial election year at the FBA's March 27 monthly meeting at the Melrose Hotel.

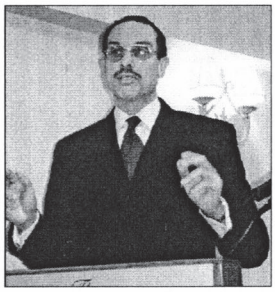
Gray, running for Council Chair against Councilmember Kathy Patterson (D-Ward 3), said that affordable housing and rent control are "probably the biggest issue before the council right now."

He said the council was likely to vote in April on rent-control measures sponsored by Councilmember Jim Graham (D-Ward 1), with competing provisions proposed by Mayor Williams also being considered.

Gray gave a detailed outline of the city's education system, which he said was in financial trouble, and said he supported everything from spending more money for quality teachers to reducing teenage parenting, which he called "a contributor to so much of our social pathology."

Gray supports school modernization and upgrading facilities, though does not support school vouchers, which he said conflicted with public education goals.

He said the city has a "crisis in health care" and said he supported a measure that would encourage health care providers such as doctors and nurses to work in underserved areas for four years, while in exchange the city would pay off part of their student loans.



Council Chair Contender: *D.C. Council member Vincent Gray (D-Ward 7), a candidate for Council Chair, was the featured speaker at the FBA's March 27 monthly meeting.*

Photos: FBN

Although he has only been on the council for 15 months – and would not have to relinquish his seat, should he lose the election for chair – Gray said he had led various groups for the past 20 years in Ward 7, including the Covenant House, which helps homeless and the needy.

Supporting a Dialogue

In response to questions from Foggy Bottom residents, Gray said he did not have a position on a proposal, backed by Ward 2 Councilmember Jack Evans (D), to tear down the Whitehurst Freeway. He said that "on the surface, it seemed like more traffic would feed into the local streets," if the longtime freeway was torn down.

In response to a recent *Washington Post* account of the city's plan to install more free Internet service in poorer areas of D.C. – one of which included much of the GWU campus – Gray said that he "would be happy to make the argument that that doesn't fit.

"There's no way you can equate GW with living in Ward 7 or 8," said Gray, who did both his undergraduate and graduate work at GWU. "That's ludicrous," he said.

He did say that if elected as chair, he would be "happy [to be] part of a process of getting the parties to the table," in response to questions about supporting the FBA as it sought to have GWU's campus plan enforced.

Gray also said he was not likely to support any mayoral candidate in the upcoming race.

– FBN

See you in September: *Lt. Philip Lanciano of the Metropolitan Police Department made an appearance at the FBA meeting last week – his last until September. Lt. Lanciano is off to the F.B.I. National Academy in Quantico, Va., for three months of training, to be followed by a two-month leave with his children.*

GWU, School Without Walls Set Plan for Renovation, New Dorm on F Street

George Washington University and School Without Walls, the alternative public high school in GWU's campus on G Street, unveiled plans for renovation of SWW and for the university's planned new dormitory surrounding the high school.

The project, to be proposed this month as a planned unit development (PUD) which would need a zoning waiver, would be for an addition to the existing school and for the residence hall behind it, which would face F Street.

Both parties spoke in favor of the plan at a public meeting March 23 at GWU's hospital.

SWW Principal Sheila Harris said she was "tickled pink" at the plans for the high school, which has been in existence since 1971 and now has 340 students. The renovations would allow the school to take in more students, she said.

"School Without Walls is a metaphor for the kind of educational process that occurs within the walls," she said.

Tom Brady, chief business officer of the D.C. School Board, also spoke in favor of the plan, as did GWU Treasurer Lou Katz. GWU offers class slots for students and teachers from the high school, including physical education classes, as the school has no gym facilities.

Sean O'Donnell, an architect with Ehrenkrantz, Eckstut & Kuhn, who designed the project, said the plans emphasize leaving much of the natural light that comes in through the school's large windows.

'Most Attractive Housing'

GWU will pay $12.2 million for the school's land – a parking lot and a tennis court behind it for the dorm location. Katz said he believed there would be "little opposition" to the proposed plan from the community.

The dorm, which is designed to have units for four people with individual bedrooms, would cater to upper classmen, Katz said, presumably keeping such students in the campus's main area and out of the Foggy Bottom historic district.

"We think it will be our most attractive housing," Katz said.

The proposed PUD – to be filed separately from the university's recent proposed 20-year campus plan – would increase density on the block to a floor-area-ratio (FAR) of 5.14, Katz said, "slightly higher" than the rest of the campus plan. FAR is a measurement of how densely buildings or blocks are zoned and developed.

The two said they envisioned construction taking 18 months to two years and to be complete by 2009. *– FBN*

KenCen Tour Set for Tuesday

The FBA has made arrangements for a backstage tour of the Kennedy Center for members of the Foggy Bottom / West End community. It will be held next Tuesday, April 11, at 6 p.m.

The tour will be led by Mickey Berra, the center's vice president of production, who has many wonderful stories to tell along with detailed descriptions of backstage workings. Please join us for a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the Kennedy Center's performance spaces!

Space is limited and reservations, required, will be honored in the order received. Please call 202-338-2079 or e-mail FBA Board member Jackie Lemire at jglemire@aol.com, with your name and phone number.

THE FOGGY BOTTOM NEWS
c/o West End Library
24th & L Streets, NW, Washington, DC 20037

Editor-in-Chief: Michael G. Malloy
foggybottomnews@yahoo.com

The Foggy Bottom News is published by the Foggy Bottom Association as a service to its members and provides information on FBA and neighborhood news, programs, activities and other events of interest to FBA members. Contributions and story ideas are welcome, but the FBN reserves the right to edit or hold pieces as space requires.

The Foggy Bottom Association was formed by a group of citizens in 1955 and was formally incorporated in 1959. Attendance at FBA meetings is open to all residents of Foggy Bottom and the West End.

FBA Officers:
PRESIDENT – Joy Howell • VICE PRESIDENT – Barbara Spillinger
SECRETARY – Jill Nevius • TREASURER – Russell Conlan
MEMBERSHIP – Edward B. Gable Jr.

FBA Board of Directors:
Ellie Becker, Joseph G. Chaplick, Elizabeth B. Elliott, Jacqueline G. Lemire, Michael G. Malloy, James R. O'Leary, Ronald Cocome (Immediate Past President; *Ex Officio*)

➡ ➡ ➡ FOGGY BOTTOM NEWS continues on next page ➡ ➡ ➡

➡ ➡ ➡ *Foggy Bottom News (continued from preceding page) April 5, 2006*

Square 54

Another Broken Promise from George Washington University

What the community wants on Square 54:

On-campus housing for undergraduates

Square 54 is located inside the GWU campus boundary, away from the residential community to the south and west.

On-campus classrooms

Square 54 is part of the GWU Campus Core and would alleviate the need for students to go several blocks off campus or further out into the residential areas.

Meeting space for student groups

Students often can't find any place to meet because GWU rents out the Marvin Center, their supposed meeting place.

Green Space

The late Maria Tyler, longtime Foggy Bottom advocate, insisted that the best use for Square 54 would be a park to complement Washington Circle.

What GWU wants on Square 54:

An oversized, for-profit, commercial and retail development smack in the middle of Foggy Bottom

No classrooms, no student residences, no greenspace. More development for thousands more residents, office workers and cars, in addition to 20,000+ GWU students—an overwhelming burden for our fragile residential community.

What city health administrators say:

Foggy Bottom is a neighborhood that officials believe is at the "tipping point" for livability and good health.

Go to www.savefoggybottom.com and sign up for more information about this project. Stay tuned for further Foggy Bottom Association messages about Square 54.

Photo: M. Malloy